

REMARKS

Claims 1-10 are pending in this application. The Specification has been amended to cross-reference the foreign priority.

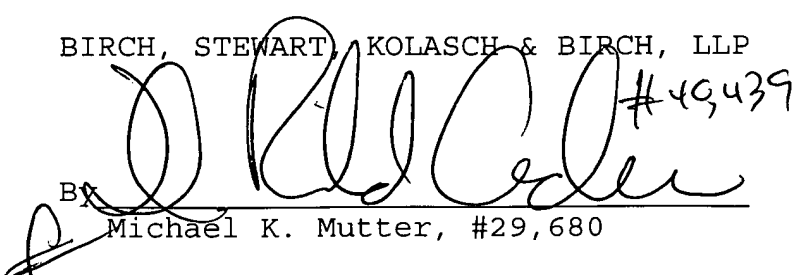
Conclusion

Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Mr. Michael K. Mutter (Reg. No. 29,680) at the telephone number of the undersigned below, to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

BIRCH, STEWART, KOLASCH & BIRCH, LLP

 #49,439
By Michael K. Mutter, #29,680

MKM/nl
0879-0441PUS1

P.O. Box 747
Falls Church, VA 22040-0747
(703) 205-8000